UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

For participants only

E/1990/SR.1
22 January 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Organizational session for 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 17 January 1990, at 3 p.m.

Temporary President: Mr. MORTENSEN (Denmark)

President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

CONTENTS

Opening of the session

Election of officers

Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the organizational session of the Economic and Social Council for 1990 open.

Speaking as the outgoing President, he observed that the Council was meeting not only at the beginning of a new decade but also at a time of major global developments. Its two-fold task would be to meet the new challenges in the economic and social fields while at the same time strengthening international co-operation in solving the existing problems. That would require a more effective functioning of the Council and its secretariat, which must be made more responsive to current and new demands.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT informed the members of the Council that the Group of Asian States had endorsed the candidacy of Mr. Gharekhan (India) for the post of President of the Council for 1990.

Mr. Gharekhan (India) was elected President by acclamation.

Mr. Gharekhan (India) took the Chair.

The PRESIDENT said that the Council was meeting during a period of momentous international developments, primarily political and economic but with ramifications in all areas of life. In striving to reinforce the gains of the past and to pinpoint future goals, the Council would have to work in a comprehensive, effective and productive manner.

As to the state of the world economy at the outset of the new decade, the developed market economies were experiencing the seventh year of uninterrupted expansion, while the developing countries as a whole had experienced stagnation or slow growth throughout the previous decade. The new need for greater integration of the Eastern European countries into the world economy also required significant international economic co-operation, which would undoubtedly be facilitated by the

(The President)

reduction of political tensions and the move towards disarmament. The challenge was to manage that spectrum of risks and opportunities so that all could enjoy the resulting benefits. He was confident that all his colleagues would work with determination to make the Council responsive and effective as it did its part in the common effort.

In accordance with rule 18 of its rules of procedure, the Council was required to elect four Vice-Presidents. He had been informed that, following informal consultations within three of the regional groups, the following candidates had been nominated: Mr. Djoudi (Algeria), Mr. Oudovenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) and Mr. Montaño (Mexico). The name of the candidate to be nominated by the Group of Western European and other States would be communicated at a later date.

Mr. Djoudi (Algeria), Mr. Oudovenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) and Mr. Montaño (Mexico) were elected Vice-Presidents of the Council for 1990 by acclamation.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT said that, on the basis of the guidelines set out in Council resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114 on the revitalization and improved functioning of the Council, the members would be considering the provisional agenda for the organizational session (E/1990/2) and a note by the Secretary-General containing the proposed basic programme of work of the Council for 1990 and 1991 (E/1990/1 and Add.1). The Council would also be receiving a report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114, including a draft six-year work programme on major policy themes in the economic and social sectors (E/1990/14); a consolidated note by the Secretary-General containing extracts of decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session in the economic, social and related fields, highlighting matters that required action by Member States and organizations of the United Nations system (E/1990/INF/2 and Add.1); and the report of the open-ended Task Force on Documentation (E/1990/13).

In addition, the Council's attention was drawn to the matters requiring action at its organizational session, listed under item 2 of the provisional agenda. In accordance with paragraph 2 (1) of Council resolution 1988/77, it was his intention

(The President)

to hold consultations, as appropriate, with members of the Bureau and the Council on the proposed basic programme of work and other organizational matters, on the basis of which the Bureau would submit its recommendations on those matters for consideration by the Council at its next meeting. It was hoped that such a procedure would enable the Council to shorten its organizational session, which had originally been scheduled to be held from 6 to 9 February.

The Council's attention was also drawn to the elections to subsidiary bodies of the Council still to be held under item 4 of the provisional agenda. Pursuant to its resolution 1989/45, 13 additional members had to be elected to the Commission on the Status of Women, as indicated in document E/1990/L.1, and the Chairmen of the three regional groups concerned were invited to hold the necessary consultations on their nominations. Elections postponed from previous sessions, as indicated under item 4 of the provisional agenda, must also be held.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.

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UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

For participants only

E/1990/SR.2
9 February 1990
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

Organizational session of 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 6 February 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

CONTENTS

Election of the Bureau (continued)

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Basic programme of work of the Council:

(a) Implementation of Council resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114

(b) Proposals on the basic programme of work of the Council for 1990 and 1991

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

ELECTION OF THE BUREAU (continued)

The PRESIDENT said that the Group of Western European and Other States had nominated Mr. Burke (Ireland) for the remaining post of Vice-President of the Council for 1990.

Mr. Burke (Ireland) was elected Vice-President by acclamation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1990/2, E/1990/15, E/1990/17, E/1990/19; E/1990/L.12, E/1990/L.13)

The PRESIDENT said that it had been agreed, in accordance with the established practice of rotation in the distribution of functions among the Vice-Presidents of the Council, that, in 1990, Mr. Djoudi (Algeria) would chair the First (Economic) Committee, Mr. Oudovenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) the Second (Social) Committee and Mr. Montaño (Mexico) the Third (Programme and Co-ordination) Committee and that Mr. Burke (Ireland) would co-ordinate informal consultations and perform other tasks as required by the Council.

Mr. ANDREEN (Sweden) introduced the proposal of his delegation, as contained in document E/1990/19, and said that, despite the existence of various instruments which addressed the situation and rights of the disabled, they had not, in his country's opinion, been applied with sufficient rigour. Further efforts were required in order to ensure the proper implementation of the commitments undertaken by the international community. As proposed in document E/1990/19, his country would like to see the establishment of an international convention on the rights of disabled people, the purpose of which would be to ensure the practical implementation of the existing international norms on human rights with regard to disabled people. The intention was not to establish new rights but to ensure the effective exercise of rights which were already recognized. A working group could be set up to discuss the matter. The group would submit a report in 1991 to the Commission for Social Development, which could then, in 1992, following the

(Mr. Andreen, Sweden)

termination of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, report to the General Assembly.

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to approve the provisional agenda of its organizational session for 1990 (E/1990/2), with the inclusion, under item 2, of the questions contained in documents E/1990/15, E/1990/17, E/1990/19, E/1990/L.12 and E/1990/L.13.

It was so decided.

BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COUNCIL

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 1988/77 AND 1989/114

(b) PROPOSALS ON THE BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1990 AND 1991 (E/1990/1 and Add.1, E/1990/13; E/1990/L.14)

Mr. BLANÇA (Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation) said that the important changes occurring at the international level augured well for the initiation of a new era of international co-operation, in which both the tasks of and the possibilities open to Member States and the United Nations would be considerable. In 1990, the Council was meeting in exceptional circumstances. Recent political events provided new opportunities to strengthen international co-operation but had also eliminated the traditional view of international relations and economic development. Appropriate lessons should therefore be drawn from the experience of the 1980s for the development of developing countries and an attempt made to identify the trends expected in the 1990s.

The Council must be sure to take advantage of the increase in international economic and social co-operation and to deal with the new problems which arose. The political dialogue between the major Powers and the reduction of tensions raised hopes for a reduction of military spending, which would allow more resources to be devoted to economic and social development.

The recent events in Eastern Europe would lead to a more dynamic world economic situation. The current period of transition towards democracy and a market economy in that region was somewhat precarious. Nevertheless, efforts towards economic restructuring and the region's integration into the world economy would have significant long-term consequences.

(Mr. Blanca)

In the short term, there was a risk that financial resources would be redirected towards Eastern Europe at the expense of the developing countries. It was therefore necessary to protect the economies of the most vulnerable developing countries, particularly the least developed countries. Additional resources were vital for the economic revival of Eastern Europe. It would also be necessary to evaluate the "peace dividends", in order to ensure that United Nations assistance to the international community made it possible to reap those dividends. It was also important, at the current transitional stage, that Eastern Europe should duly bear in mind the social aspects of development.

The special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation, in particular to the revitalization of economic growth and development of the developing countries, should provide scope for an analysis of chronic problems such as those of debt, high interest rates, deteriorating conditions of exchange and threats to trade. There should also be an analysis of how certain new phenomena such as the increasingly international nature of economics, technological progress (particularly in the sphere of information) growing concern for the protection of the environment and the utilization of human resources and changes in Eastern Europe could facilitate the elaboration of joint approaches to promote co-operation and revitalize growth and development.

The results of the special session would be crucial for the adoption in 1990 of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade and for the convening of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

Preparatory work would also have to begin in 1990 for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, due to be held in 1992. The convening of that Conference indicated the importance accorded by the international community to a problem which would apparently be among the most important prominent questions of the future. In order for the Conference to be successful, it was necessary to bear in mind the interests of the developing countries, particularly with respect to the transfer of resources and technology, and to allow them to participate fully in both preparations and the Conference itself.

(Mr. Blanca)

Proper consideration of the programme of work of the Council would have a considerable effect on the United Nations ability to resolve the questions addressed in that programme. The orientation of the Council's work should be clearer. The Secretary-General had noted in his report that the approval of a multi-year work programme for the in-depth consideration of major policy themes would allow the Council to carry out its work on a thematic basis and to concentrate its attention on specific questions. In proposing transitional arrangements for 1990 and 1991, the Secretary-General hoped to facilitate the work of Member States and the Secretariat by enabling them to acquire the experience required for an in-depth consideration of major policy themes. The themes suggested by the Secretary-General for the transitional period or the multi-year work programme were designed to make the Council's job easier.

The adoption of a multi-year work programme would also enable the Council to consider the reports of its subsidiary organs in more detail, given the number of questions included in the Council's programme and its methods of work. There was a need to rationalize that programme. The Secretary-General had submitted proposals in that connection which were designed, first and foremost, to reduce the number of questions in the programme by merging some with others. With regard to the modalities by which the Council might choose to consider the reports of its subsidiary organs, the Secretary-General had made various suggestions in his report to the Council, contained in document E/1989/95. The Council had to be more rigorous in the exercise of its authority, because currently too little attention was paid to the programme of work, the calendar of meetings and the documentation of subsidiary organs.

In order to revitalize the Council, fresh ideas and impetus must be provided and government participation must be increased. That could be achieved if a segment of the sessions was set aside for in-depth consideration, at the ministerial level, of the most important general policy themes. In a broader context, the Council must reaffirm its function and be more attuned to the interests and concerns of the organs and organizations of the United Nations system and to public opinion. The public's image of the functions and activities of the United Nations was vital to the Organization itself and to the support received

(Mr. Blanca)

from Member States. It would be useful to set up a mechanism whereby the public could be encouraged to participate and give its views on certain questions. To that end, annual meetings could be held at which representatives of various sectors of society and of Member States could exchange views on issues of general interest. As things stood, there was a disturbing absence of coverage of United Nations activities in the news media at times even in the most specialized media. One might ask whether the topics dealt with were incapable of arousing any interest. It was also important to encourage the active involvement of the research institutes of the United Nations system and, through them, of academic circles in the economic and social analyses carried out by the Secretariat.

The recent changes on the international political scene were creating a climate conducive to dialogue on international economic and social co-operation. Member States obviously had renewed confidence in the United Nations and the Organization was playing a more important role than it had in the past. The United Nations must be able to tackle the various global problems effectively and if it was to do so, its intergovernmental mechanism in the economic and social sectors, and also the Secretariat, must be able to respond more effectively to the present and future concerns of the international community.

Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic) said that his delegation would take an active part in the search for solutions and would try to strengthen multilateral co-operation among States. He endorsed the proposals on the basic programme of work of the Council for 1990 and 1991 and the Bureau's proposals on the organization of work.

It would be preferable for the in-depth consideration of major policy themes, suggested in Council resolution 1989/114, to take place at the regular sessions of the Council. That would enable the Council to complete its work in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. However, he wondered whether it would be technically feasible for senior officials to participate in both sessions. The Council might consider the possibility of conducting only one in-depth consideration of major policy themes a year and of including such themes as poverty and indebtedness, the social consequences of scientific and technological progress, the environment, production and consumption, economic

(Mr. Zachmann, German Democratic Republic)

development and youth, food security and employment policies and human resources development. Combined proposals, such as those contained in paragraph 16 of document E/1990/14, could also be considered. His delegation endorsed those proposals, although it believed that priority should be given to implementing the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade. That raised the question whether the Council should consider the item in question six months after it had been taken up by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, as planned. However, if most Council members agreed to proceed in that manner, his delegation would support the decision.

Mr. ORTIZ GANDARILLAS (Observer for Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, proposed the topic of resources for development and external indebtedness of the developing countries as a priority issue for general discussion at the second regular session of the Council in 1990. According to the Group of 77 proposal, there would be no major policy themes for 1990, bearing in mind the considerations put forward by the Secretary-General in paragraph 12 of his report in document E/1990/14.

In accordance with paragraph 2 (a) (iii) of Council resolution 1988/77, the Council would discuss as an urgent and emerging issue in 1991 the theme of the impact of the recent evolution of East-West relations on the world economy, in particular, on the economic growth and development of the developing countries.

That theme would be discussed at a special meeting at the ministerial level, to be held on the first two days of the second regular session of the Council. The meeting would be separate from the regular proceedings of the Council and would precede its general discussion. The Secretary-General would be invited to take the necessary measures to ensure adequate preparation of the meeting, including the possibility of proposing at the second regular session of 1990 appropriate modalities for that purpose, and all the relevant organs, organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations would be invited to contribute to the successful outcome of the special meeting.

The Group of 77 believed that the process of revitalizing the Council was very important and it therefore proposed that the duration of the programme of work should be changed from six to three years so that results could be reviewed

(Mr. Ortiz Gandarillas, Observer, Bolivia)

earlier. The multi-year work programme should be reviewed annually and adjusted on a roll-over basis as necessary, as stipulated in paragraph 3 of resolution 1989/114.

The in-depth consideration of major policy themes should take place at a special five-day, high-level meeting, scheduled between the two regular sessions of the Council from 1992 onwards. That meeting should come up with concrete results and action-oriented conclusions and recommendations for the guidance of the United Nations system. The thematic analyses for those themes would be prepared on a system-wide basis in accordance with paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 26 of Council resolution 1989/114.

The Group of 77 proposed that the following themes should be considered in the 1992-1994 period: in 1992, the international trade system and its impact on the development of the developing countries; and eradication of poverty in the developing countries, including the impact of structural adjustment programmes on vulnerable groups; in 1993, environment and development; and population, development and socio-economic indicators; and in 1994, technology and industrialization in the development process of the developing countries; and international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs.

The Group of 77 hoped that its proposals would win the support of all the other groups. He was certain that an atmosphere of good will and mutual trust and a spirit of co-operation could be achieved.

Mr. BURKE (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the European Economic Community, said that in view of the importance of the Group of 77 proposal, the Community would examine it closely, in consultation with its various member capitals. Like the Group of 77, the Community was ready to co-operate with the other groups.

The formal meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

For participants only

E/1990/SR.3
12 February 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Organizational session for 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 8 February 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

CONTENTS

Elections and appointments to subsidiary bodies of the Council and confirmation of representatives on the functional commissions

Corrections to this record should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE COUNCIL AND CONFIRMATION OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE FUNCTIONAL COMMISSIONS (E/1990/2, 3 and 11; E/1990/L.1)

Commission on the Status of Women

The PRESIDENT drew attention to document E/1990/L.1 and recalled that, by its resolution 1989/45, the Council had decided to increase the membership of the Commission from 32 to 45 and that the 13 additional seats should be filled at the Council's organizational session for 1990.

Mrs. BENARY (Secretary of the Council) said that the following candidates had been endorsed by their respective regional groups to fill the newly created vacancies on the Commission of the Status of Women: Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, for the seats allocated to the Group of African States; Cyprus, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Malaysia, for the seats allocated to the Group of Asian States; and The Bahamas, Ecuador and Jamaica, for the seats allocated to the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

The PRESIDENT said that, in the absence of other candidates, he would take it the Council wished to elect the candidates just mentioned by the Council Secretary members of the Commission on the Status of Women by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Commission on Transnational Corporations

The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat had been informed that the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States had endorsed the candidacy of Argentina to fill the vacant seat from that Group for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 1992. In the absence of other candidates, he took it that the Council wished to elect Argentina a member of the Commission on Transnational Corporations by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting

The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat had been informed that the Group of Eastern European States had endorsed the candidacy of Hungary to fill the vacant seat from that Group for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 1991. In the absence of other candidates, he took it that the Council wished to elect Hungary a member of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Vacancies on subsidiary bodies of the Council for which elections had been postponed from previous sessions

The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat had not been notified of any candidates to fill the vacancies on the Population Commission or the Committee on Natural Resources as well as the vacancies other than those filled at the current meeting on the Commission on Transnational Corporations and the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting. He therefore suggested that elections to fill those vacancies should be postponed to the Council's first regular session of 1990.

It was so decided.

Committee for Development Planning

The PRESIDENT drew attention to document E/1990/11, which contained the names and biographical data of 24 experts nominated by the Secretary-General for appointment in their personal capacity as members of the Committee for Development Planning for a three-year term ending on 31 December 1992. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to appoint the 24 experts members of the Committee for Development Planning by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Confirmation of representatives (E/1990/3)

The PRESIDENT drew attention to document E/1990/3, which contained the names of representatives of the functional commissions which had been submitted for confirmation by the Council since the close of the organizational session for

(The President)

1989. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to confirm those nominations.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

For participants only

E/1990/SR.4
20 February 1990
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

First regular session of 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 9 February 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

CONTENTS

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (continued)

Basic programme of work of the Council (continued)

(a) Implementation of Council resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114

(b) Proposals on the basic programme of work of the Council for 1990 and 1991

Provisional agenda for the first regular session of 1990 and related organizational matters

Closure of the session

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The meeting was called to order at 4.35 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (continued) (E/1990/2; E/1990/L.17)

BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COUNCIL (continued)

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 1988/77 AND 1989/114

(b) PROPOSALS ON THE BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1990 AND 1991 (E/1990/L.15 and Add.1 and Add.2, E/1990/L.16)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF 1990 AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1990/L.15, draft decision I, section A)

Draft resolution E/1990/L.17

Dame Anne HERCUS (New Zealand) introduced draft resolution E/1990/L.17, in connection with the adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters, and said that Canada, Cape Verde, Jamaica, Pakistan and Singapore had become sponsors. Some regions of the world were, unfortunately, particularly prone to natural disasters, which both had immediate effects in terms of losses of human life and urgent basic requirements for food, water and medical supplies and also gave rise to the longer-term problem of social and economic recovery.

Cyclone Ofa had left a number of people dead in Samoa and Tonga. There had been severe losses in Samoa: in some villages, 80 per cent of the housing was destroyed and damage to forest areas would have a serious effect on food sources in the months to come. In Niue, as in other low-lying islands, exceptionally high seas had added to the destructive impact of the cyclone. In Tuvalu and Tonga, crops and housing had been badly affected. In Tokelau, exceptionally high winds resulted, inter alia, in severe damage to a clinic and the destruction of a radio station.

Various States and organizations had responded to the situation in a prompt and encouraging manner, and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) had established a special trust fund to assist peoples affected by Cyclone Ofa. She appealed for the assistance of Member States.

The PRESIDENT announced that Tunisia had become a sponsor of draft resolution E/1990/L.17. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt that draft resolution.

It was so decided.

Mrs. MAUALA (Observer for Samoa) said that, according to preliminary reports, Cyclone Ofa had left 25,000 people homeless in her country, completely destroyed its staple food crops and caused major damage to the coconut and cocoa industries, those being the principal export crops. Although few lives had been lost, the whole population had been severely affected. A preliminary report suggested that damage amounted to some $200 million. The most daunting factor was the massive damage done to the country's agricultural base, because crops, apart from constituting its major source of income, were also its principal source of sustenance and employment for the majority of the population.

Her country was deeply grateful for the immediate assistance and support provided to it by Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America, as well as for the untiring efforts of staff of the United Nations Development Programme and UNDRO. She was also heartened by the manner in which the United Nations, through the Economic and Social Council, had responded to the needs of Samoa and other islands in the region, as well as by the vital help provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the World Food Programme.

For the victims of disasters, General Assembly resolutions 42/169 and 44/236 and the beginning of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction were of particular significance. Noting that Cyclone Ofa had highlighted the vulnerability of small island developing countries to such phenomena, she urged all Member States to see that the goals of the Decade were attained and to consider possible ways of ensuring that full use was made of measures for the alleviation of suffering caused by natural disasters.

Draft decision I (E/1990/L.15)

Part I, sections A to D

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt sections A to D of part I.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that, in connection with item 7 of the agenda for the second regular session, entitled "International co-operation in the field of informatics", it was the understanding of the Council that appropriate documentation for consideration of that item would be provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Part I, sections E to L

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt sections E to L of part I.

It was so decided.

Part I, section M

The PRESIDENT said that the Bureau had, following consultations, decided to entrust Mr. Burke (Ireland), Vice-President of the Council, with the task of convening meetings, as required, of the task force, on the understanding that, in doing so, Mr. Burke would be acting in his capacity as Vice-President of the Council.

Mr. LICHTINGER requested clarification as to the task force's mandate.

The PRESIDENT said that the task force's mandate had been extended to enable it to study the documents before the Council and to determine which were superfluous or redundant. It would prepare a final report, to be considered by the Council at its second regular session.

Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia) asked whether it would be possible for the task force to meet before the second regular session of the Council, given the quantity of economic work to be carried out during the first week and the fact that the President would have to hold consultations on the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council at the same time. He therefore proposed that Mr. Burke, in his capacity as Vice-President of the Council, begin to hold consultations on 1 July 1990.

The PRESIDENT, taking that proposal into account, asked Mr. Burke to hold consultations with the representative of Tunisia and the other members of the Council with a view to setting the dates for meetings of the task force. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt section M of part I.

It was so decided.

Part I, section N

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt section N of part I.

It was so decided.

Part I, section O (E/1990/L.15/Add.1)

The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat would ensure that all the other language versions the accurately reflected the original English text. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt section O of part I.

It was so decided.

Part I, section P

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt section P of part I.

It was so decided.

Part II, sections A and B

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt sections A and B of part II.

It was so decided.

Draft decision II

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt draft decision II.

It was so decided.

Draft decision III

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt draft decision III.

It was so decided.

Draft decision IV

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt draft decision IV.

It was so decided.

Draft decision V (E/1990/L.15/Add.2)

The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat would ensure that all the other language versions accurately reflected the original English text. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt draft decision V.

It was so decided.

Mr. LICHTINGER (Mexico), referring to draft decision V as just adopted and, in particular, to the consultations which the President was to hold between the organizational session and the second regular session of 1990 on all matters relating to the revitalization of the Council, suggested that the President should include in such consultations the question of the relationship between economic and social factors in the growth and development process, an issue which the Council had not had time to consider in depth at the current organizational session, as called for in its resolution 1989/113.

Draft decision on Liberia

Mr. FERNANDEZ (Liberia), supported by Mr. DJOGHLAF (Algeria), Mr. OULD CHEIKH EL GHAOUTH (Observer for Mauritania), Mr. MOUMOUNI (Niger), Mr. FALL (Observer for Senegal) and Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), asked the Economic and Social Council to request the Committee for Development Planning to consider, at its twenty-sixth session, whether Liberia met the conditions for inclusion in the list of least developed countries.

Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia) also supported Liberia's request. The developing countries were facing a serious recession. He hoped that at the special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation, in particular to the revitalization of economic growth and development in the developing countries, emphasis would be placed on the economic problems of the least developed countries.

The PRESIDENT, responding to the request by Liberia, said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council decided to adopt the following draft decision:

"The Economic and Social Council decides to request the Committee for Development Planning to consider the question of the inclusion of Liberia in the list of least developed countries."

It was so decided.

Mr. TER HORST (Assistant Secretary-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation) said that the agreement reached at the current organizational session on a multi-year work programme for the in-depth consideration of major policy themes by the Council represented significant progress and one of the most important advances made in implementing the Council's resolutions on its own revitalization. The Council's decision to consider, at its second regular session of 1990 and at a high-level meeting to be held in 1991, the impact of recent developments in East-West relations on the growth of the global economy, particularly on the economic growth and development of developing countries and on international economic co-operation, was commendable, for that was an urgent, emerging problem. The Secretariat would endeavour to assist both with the deliberations on that question in 1990 and in providing appropriate documentation for the special meeting in 1991. With regard to the consultations that the President was to hold on the subject of revitalization, a number of issues had yet to be resolved, such as those relating to rationalization of the agenda through the consolidation of closely related or similar items, reduction of the volume of documentation and procedures for the Council's consideration of the reports of its subsidiary organs. He suggested that, in the course of the consultations, the President should also analyse the ideas put forward by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation concerning the possibility of new, independent inputs into the work of the United Nations and the need to foster media and public interest in the work of the Organization in the economic and social sectors. The Secretariat had followed the deliberations of the current session with interest, welcomed their outcome and was ready to provide continued assistance.

The PRESIDENT brought to the Council's attention a letter he had just received from the Chairman of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights informing him that the Committee, at its recent session held from 15 January to 2 February 1990, had decided to recommend strongly that the report of the Committee to the Council be presented in person by one of its members, who would eventually also participate in the Council's deliberations during its first regular session of 1990, at which the Council was to review the composition, organization and administrative arrangements of the Committee. In that connection, the Committee

(The President)

had asked him to consider the possibility of inviting the Committee's Rapporteur for that purpose. The Bureau of the Council had recommended that the Council revert to that matter at the beginning of its first regular session of 1990. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council agreed with the proposal of the Bureau.

It was so decided.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

After an exchange of courtesies, the President declared the organizational session of the Economic and Social Council for 1990 closed.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

For participants only

E/1990/SR.5
3 May 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

First regular session of 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 1 May 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

CONTENTS

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Corrections to this record should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1990/23, annex V, E/1990/30 and Corr.1, 45, 63 and 64; E/1990/L.18/Rev.1 and L.19)

Mr. KITCHKAILO (Observer for the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) referred to the letter dated 26 April 1990 from the Permanent Representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (E/1990/64), in which the three Governments requested the inclusion of an additional item, entitled "International co-operation in the elimination of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant", in the agenda of the first regular session of 1990 of the Economic and Social Council. He hoped that the members of the Council would respond positively to that request.

In the four years since the accident, the State bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR had made considerable efforts to eliminate the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. New and thorough inspections and scientific research had revealed that the scope of those consequences had been underestimated at the national level and that their international social, human, economic, ecological and technological aspects had been greater than expected.

Vast populated areas of the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and some western regions of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic, including some 7 million hectares of arable land and more than 2.5 million hectares of forests, had been contaminated. One fifth of the entire population of the Byelorussian SSR, or 2.2 million people, lived in the contaminated areas. The Byelorussian SSR had lost 20 per cent of its farmlands and nearly 15 per cent of its forests. The loss to the Republic's economy had been estimates at 82 billion roubles, and the Republic's six-year State programme for the elimination of the long-term consequences of the Chernobyl accident had been estimated at 18 billion roubles.

(Mr. Kitchkailo, Observer, Byelorussian SSR)

The Governments of the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic were continuing urgent and large-scale measures to eliminate the consequences of the accident. By a decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 26 billion roubles had been allocated for that purpose for the years 1990 to 1992. Some of the measures being undertaken included the resettlement of families and whole communities to areas free of radionucleides, the decontamination of affected areas and the prevention of the spread of contamination to contiguous areas.

In appealing for international assistance for the first time in their history, the USSR, the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR did not simply wish to solve their national problems at other countries' expense. International co-operation in overcoming the consequences of the disaster was in the interests of all mankind. Such co-operation should include the creation of reliable safeguards for public health, in particular the health of children. The competent bodies of the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic were extremely interested in beginning technical co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to study the ecological and medical aspects of irradiation. They also supported the proposal to launch the "Children of Chernobyl" project with the participation of UNEP, WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Scientific organizations, health service institutions and environmental protection bodies in the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR intended to join the Agreement between the USSR and IAEA on establishing the International Chernobyl Research Centre. The Byelorussian SSR was prepared to establish a branch of the Centre at Mogilev or Gomel, and proposed that an international committee be established to study the effects of the Chernobyl accident on the ecosystem.

Mr. GALAL (Observer for Egypt) said that his delegation was pleased to submit a request for the inclusion under agenda item 1 of the first regular session of the Council of 1990 of the question of the revival of the Library of Alexandria. The Library had been a beacon for science and culture during the Ptolemaic era, and had contained priceless reference works on Egyptian and other

(Mr. Galal, Observer, Egypt)

Middle Eastern cultures as well as on Greek, Christian and Islamic civilization. The International Commission for the Revival of the Ancient Library of Alexandria had held its inaugural session at Aswan in February 1990, under the leadership of Mrs. Susan Mubarak. His delegation planned to submit a draft resolution on the subject to the Council at a later date.

Mr. HAYES (Ireland) suggested that the Council should defer its decision on the requests made by the representatives of the Byelorussian SSR and Egypt in order to give members time to consider them.

Mr. SOTIROV (Bulgaria), Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia), Mr. MENON (India), Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia), Mr. AL-ANBARI (Iraq), Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire) and Mr. ARABIAT (Jordan), supported the request of the Byelorussian SSR for the inclusion of an additional item on international co-operation in the elimination of the consequences of the accident of the Chernobyl power plant, and the request of Egypt for the inclusion under agenda item 1 of the question of the revival of the Library of Alexandria.

The PRESIDENT said that, bearing in mind the request of the representative of Ireland and also the importance of the requests, by the delegations of the Byelorussian SSR and Egypt, he suggested that the Economic and Social Council defer its decision on them for a few days. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council agreed to consider the requests made by the Byelorussian SSR and Egypt at a subsequent meeting.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the agenda for the first regular session of 1990 as contained in documents E/1990/30 and Corr.1, and that it approved the organization of work as contained in document E/1990/L.19.

It was so decided.

Mr. STOBY (Secretary of the Council) drew attention to document E/1990/L.18/Rev.1 on the status of documentation for the session, and informed the Council that document E/1990/31 would be issued only on 2 May, while document E/1990/39, containing the report of the Advisory Committee on Co-ordination on the development of a United Nations system-wide action plan on drug abuse control, would be issued only on 18 May. Since the latter would have to be reviewed by the

(Mr. Stoby)

Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC), and since the Council would be considering it together with the relevant chapter of the CPC report on its thirtieth session, the Council might wish to postpone consideration of document E/1990/39 until its second regular session of 1990, under the item entitled "Co-ordination questions".

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/1990/63) on requests from non-governmental organizations for hearings. He would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Council approved the Committee's recommendation in paragraph 2 of its report.

It was so decided.

Mr. AHMED (Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs) observed that the interrelationship of the social situation and economic development and questions relating to the advancement of women had been given intensive consideration during the preparation of the international development strategy for the coming decade and during the current special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation. The special session was about to conclude with the adoption by consensus of a Declaration that provided a historic occasion to usher in a new era of economic growth and development in the developing countries, and the Council must now decide how best to implement its goals. The Council's debate of such matters was therefore timely.

The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs had submitted a supplement to the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation to assist the Council in its consideration of the item on social development. The main finding of that supplement was, of course, that economic stagnation and decline during the 1980s in developing countries, particularly in Africa and Latin America, had set back social progress and reversed the positive trends of the three preceding decades. Of the 53 developing countries so affected, 27 were in Africa, 18 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 7 in West Asia and 1 in Asia. Despite the remarkable rise in living standards in the most populous developing countries during the 1980s, the total number of those living in absolute poverty had increased to about 1 billion, or a fifth of the world's population, by the end of the decade. More than half of the

(Mr. Ahmed)

world's poor were still to be found in Asia, and poverty had become more severe in Africa.

It was a recognized fact that the deterioration of the external economic environment had been a major factor in the drastic declines in so many developing countries. Structural adjustment programmes undertaken to cope with that situation had had their own impact, particularly on social conditions, by slowing down growth in output and incomes, cutting government expenditures on social services and food subsidies, and generally hurting the poorest and most disadvantaged. The inevitable pain of structural adjustment might have been lessened if it had been attempted over a longer period, accompanied by economic growth and increased resource inflows, and if appropriate international support had cushioned some of the shocks generated by adverse terms of trade and interest rates; unfortunately, none of those conditions had obtained in recent years. There was ample evidence of the deterioration in living conditions and the aggravation of poverty in the countries affected, and the socio-political situation had, indeed, become so combustible that many of those societies were becoming ungovernable.

On the other hand, the 1980s had also been a decade of remarkably fast and radical transformations in both the economy and society. Scientific and technological advances and their application to production had been one of the oustanding features, as had the emergence of new poles of economic strength and new economic activities and products. The world economy had, moreover, moved towards greater integration because of the far-reaching changes, particularly in former centrally-planned economies, in the ways societies organized themselves for production and governance, which had led to a gradual convergence of views on economic and social policy formulation. The principal challenge in the 1990s would be to ensure that developing countries could benefit from those changes. The thaw in international tensions and the lessening of the arms race held out the promise that resources would be released for that purpose. The restructuring and modernization of the developing countries' economies and their revitalized growth depended upon non-discriminatory access to markets, relief from the debt trap, increased concessional resources to the low-income countries, and better access to new technologies. Adjustment with a human face was also a necessary part of that process, but by itself was unlikely to regenerate growth in the hard-hit

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economies. A substantial improvement in the external economic environment and a significant strengthening of international economic co-operation would be necessary to support the changes in institutions and policies required to build prosperity and ensure more even distribution of wealth and opportunities and vastly wider participation by the people. If such policies were put into practice by all Governments, the prospects of the developing countries in the 1990s would improve dramatically.

Turning to issues related to women, he noted that the Commission on the Status of Women had recently concluded a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in implementing the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. After five years, or one third of the time set for achieving the goals, major obstacles remained. Continued efforts by women had begun to have an effect at the grass-roots level, but it was an invisible success, since it had not been substantial enough to affect official statistics and governmental policies. The entrenched resistance to the advancement of women and the reduced resources available for change had meant a loss of impetus and even stagnation in some areas. The World Economic Survey had for the past two years included a special section on the socio-economic attainment of women worldwide. The World Economic Survey, 1989 had examined the role of women in the family and the trends in female participation in the labour force, and the forthcoming Survey would focus on indicators of economic distribution, health, nutrition, fertility and education, with particular attention to assessing the progress in ensuring women's access to the development process and scientific and technological advances, and to surveying the political role of women around the world, especially in Eastern Europe.

Furthermore, the United Nations Statistical Office continued to develop statistics and indicators on women, and promoted and co-ordinated uses of statistical data on women in the United Nations system, an activity that had been greatly enhanced by the development of the United Nations microcomputer, Women's Indicators and Statistics Data Base (WISTAT). The preparation of that data base and the publications based on it had been a collaborative effort involving the Statistical Office, the Population Division, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), and the statistical services of the specialized agencies. Some of

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the publications issued recently were the Compendium of Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Women, the Compendium of Statistics on Women in Africa, and a new wall chart, The Situation of Women, 1990, the latter being part of a publication on statistical trends relating to women that was being prepared in collaboration with a number of other agencies. WISTAT had also provided extensive statistics for the 1989 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development and the chapter on women in the forthcoming World Economic Survey. Although General Assembly resolution 44/171 had requested that WISTAT should be updated regularly at two-year intervals, he regretted to report that much of the work to date had been done with extrabudgetary funding and that the funding for continued work on the project had not been secured.

One of the far-reaching recommendations in the Forward-looking Strategies concerned the measurement of women's contribution to development as reflected in national accounts. The importance of that area of work had recently been reaffirmed by the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Statistical Commission had agreed that a technical report on methods of compilation, valuation and analysis should be prepared to assist countries in developing such statistics, as a way of understanding women's role in the economy, rectifying inequities in their economic situation and providing a better basis for social and economic planning. Methods of compiling statistics from the informal sector had also been developed in special field studies in Africa, and the statistics were now being compiled.

Mr. MARTENSON (Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights) said it had become ever more apparent that international peace and security and social and economic development must be founded on respect for human rights. Even in a world of reduced international tension, the failure to ensure human rights could once more ignite discord and conflict. The established international machinery for the protection of human rights must be maintained and reinforced, and international efforts in the field of public awareness and information must touch every corner of the globe to create a universal culture of human rights. Countries must receive technical assistance in strengthening their national laws and institutions, and the United Nations must expand its capacity to identify human rights violations at an early stage and act effectively to end them.

The striking restoration of democratic political institutions in a number of

(Mr. Martenson)

countries had underscored the interdependence of peace, human rights and economic and social development. The recent events had clearly informed the deliberations at the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights, where constructive dialogue had produced consensus on difficult issues, as reflected in its report to the Council. The Commission had heard 883 statements from Member States, observers and non-governmental organizations in the course of 54 meetings, and its work had been held within the projected time-limits in an unprecedented manner. The work of the pre-sessional and in-session working groups of the Commission must be underscored. After 12 years of tireless efforts, the Working Group entrusted with the drafting of a declaration on the rights of minorities had submitted a draft for consideration at the forty-sixth session.

The draft resolutions and decisions recommended by the Commission for adoption related to the situation of human rights in southern Africa, the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the implementation of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, and the updating of the list of organizations assisting the racist régime of South Africa; support for country-monitoring mechanisms; a renewal of the mandates of the various Special Rapporteurs, and the appointment of a new Special Rapporteur to consider such matters as child prostitution and pornography, as well as of an independent expert on the human rights situation in Haiti. The Commission had also proposed the establishment of a sessional working group to formulate recommendations pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 44/167. He hoped that the Commission's recommendations would meet with approval.

The Centre for Human Rights was focusing on action-oriented projects to assist Governments through the services of experts, the organization of seminars, workshops, fellowships and internships, and the dissemination of information on human rights issues. Among the most recent activities, for instance, the Centre had sent two experts to discuss the legal and technical aspects of democratic elections with members of the Government of Romania, and was organizing an Asia/Pacific Workshop for Administrators of Justice on International Human Rights Issues in co-operation with the Government of the Philippines.

Commenting on the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, in

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his capacity as the Decade's Co-ordinator, he noted that in the current favourable international situation, the global campaign against racism, racial discrimination and apartheid had entered a new phase. Developments in southern Africa indicated that peaceful and fundamental change might eventually be possible there. The time was indeed opportune for increased efforts to overcome obstacles to the dismantling of apartheid. The Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session in December 1989, expressed the international community's commitment in that connection.

In December 1990, the United Nations would celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The current year also marked 20 years of activities by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which had made a contribution of inestimable importance to United Nations efforts to eliminate racism and racial discrimination. He hoped that the Committee's serious financial situation would be solved constructively so that the Committee could carry out its mandate fully. The international community should continue to give the highest priority to programmes combating racism and racial discrimination, and to intensify its efforts to provide assistance and relief to the victims of racism and all forms of racial supremacy and prejudice and apartheid.

The fundamental objectives of the Second Decade were: to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin; to eliminate prejudice and racial discrimination; and to abolish régimes and policies based on racism. With those objectives in view, the General Assembly had approved a broad programme of activities for the entire Decade, supplemented by detailed plans of action for the periods 1985-1989 and 1990-1993. It had mandated the Council to take charge, with the Secretary-General's help, of co-ordinating the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade and of evaluating the activities undertaken during the Decade. The activities foreseen were numerous and varied. The elimination of apartheid was one of the prime objectives of the Second Decade. The release of Mr. Nelson Mandela after 27 years of imprisonment had lit a beacon of hope for the future. The Special Committee against Apartheid had a mandate to lead the combat

(Mr. Martenson)

against apartheid, and the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities repeatedly took firm stands against apartheid and undertook their own anti-apartheid activities.

As Co-ordinator for the Decade, he maintained contacts at the senior level within the various United Nations offices with a view to co-ordinating activities already under way or planned, and in order to identify areas in which new initiatives might be taken. Furthermore, at the second regular session of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, held in New York in October 1989, he had drawn attention to the question of the implementation of the Programme of Action. He had reported on recent progress in the field and made specific recommendations for future action. The matter remained on the Committee's agenda and programme of work, and would be dealt with again in October 1990. The aim was to mobilize the resources of the entire United Nations system in the fight against racism. In that context, the Centre for Human Rights was organizing an inter-agency meeting in Geneva later in the current month in order to consider further steps in the common endeavour to achieve the aims of the Second Decade.

Public information activities were clearly essential as a way of making the United Nations role in the combat against racism better known and of mobilizing public support for the objectives of the Second Decade. On numerous occasions both he and his colleagues had spoken of the fight against racism and racial discrimination in television and radio interviews on stations world wide and in United Nations broadcasts, and had also reviewed with the press the implementation of the overall programme of activities. The strengthening of contacts and co-operation with non-governmental organizations was another priority area in furthering the realization of the Programme of Action.

The Centre for Human Rights itself was giving priority to strengthening its Decade-related activities and to placing renewed emphasis on the fight against racism and on the Decade. For example, on United Nations Day in October 1989 it had held a round-table discussion in Geneva on the role of the United Nations in the promotion and protection of human rights, with specific reference to the fight against racism and racial discrimination. The Centre's activities aimed at eradicating racial discrimination figured prominently on the agenda of its workshops, training courses and seminars in the field of technical assistance and

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advisory services, as well as in the World Information Campaign for Human Rights. In the context of the Decade's activities for the period 1985-1989, the Centre had also held, at Athens in September 1989, a seminar on cultural dialogue between the countries of origin and the host countries of migrant workers. Later in the year, the Centre intended to focus attention on the root causes of racism through a seminar to which experts, governmental officials and representatives of non-governmental organizations would be invited. The Centre intended the seminar to consider a variety of factors contributing to racism and racial discrimination from the perspectives of especially vulnerable sectors of the population, and to review the causes and current manifestations of racism. The proceedings of the seminar would be widely disseminated.

As reflected in document E/1990/20 and Add.1, the information received by the Secretary-General indicated the considerable volume and wide-ranging nature of the activities carried out by the international community in the struggle against prejudice, racial discrimination and apartheid.

Over the past 12 months the more temperate international climate had also been reflected in the field of human rights, since there had been four ratifications or accessions to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and seven to the Optional Protocol in the past year. The new States parties to the Covenant were Algeria, Ireland, the Republic of Korea and Somalia, and those same States had also become parties to the Optional Protocol, together with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, New Zealand and the Philippines. Thus, 91 States were now parties to the Covenant, and 50 were parties to the Optional Protocol. By resolution 44/128, the General Assembly had adopted the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty: it had been opened for signature on 15 December 1989, and had to date been signed by 14 States and ratified by one State. Where the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was concerned, he was happy to report that to date 84 States had signed the Convention and four had already ratified it.

It could be predicted with confidence that respect for human rights would be one of the principal themes, both nationally and internationally, of the 1990s. The corresponding vastly increased demands required increased resources. Commission on Human Rights resolution 1990/25 requested the Secretary-General to

(Mr. Martenson)

submit to the Council a report on the situation and developments regarding logistical and human resources support for the Centre's increasing activities in the field of human rights, in particular with respect to servicing needs of the human-rights treaty bodies, the provisions for servicing included in the United Nations budget and the implementation of those provisions. The report (E/1990/50), which would soon be before the Council, outlined the mandate of the human-rights programme; it briefly referred to the relevant earlier resolutions and to the Centre's former and current activities, and indicated the servicing and resources required to implement the mandates. The human rights programme was greatly expanding at a time when the Centre's resources had been reduced. That expansion of mandates had to be matched by appropriate resources.

The PRESIDENT drew attention to the letter dated 2 February 1990 addressed to him by the Chairman of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/1990/23, annex V).

Mr. STOBY (Secretary of the Council) said that under the existing rules and regulations the chairman or rapporteur of a subsidiary organ who was called upon to present a report of such an organ to a parent organ was entitled to travel and subsistence at the expense of the United Nations.

If the Council were to decide to invite the Rapporteur of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to present the Committee's report to it in person, the estimated costs would be $7,500, assuming that the Rapporteur would come to New York for one week. No provision was made in the programme budget for such travel and subsistence. However, it was likely that the costs in question could be absorbed in the programme budget for the period 1990-1991.

The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to invite the Rapporteur of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to attend its meetings for one week, from 14 to 18 May 1990, during its review of the Committee's composition, organization and administrative arrangements.

It was so decided.

Mr. HASHIM (Special Co-ordinator for Emergency Relief Operations in Somalia) said that General Assembly resolution 44/178 contained an appeal to the international community to contribute generously and urgently to meet Somalia's humanitarian relief assistance needs. As identified earlier in 1989 by a United Nations inter-agency mission, those needs had comprised food for approximately 67,000 people and assistance to rehabilitate damaged infrastructure, at a total cost of around $19 million.

Unfortunately, since that report had been issued the security situation in the affected areas had shown no improvement. The difficulties under which humanitarian relief operations were being carried out could be gauged by the decision of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme to suspend, with effect from October 1989, their regular programmes for assisting refugees located in those areas. Both agencies had stressed that humanitarian assistance would be resumed as soon as conditions allowed.

In February 1990, in response to an appeal by the Somali Government, the Secretary-General had announced his decision to launch an Extraordinary Interim Emergency Programme in north-western Somalia to provide emergency relief assistance to affected persons, including 140,000 refugees, over a six-month period. The Programme represented an exceptional humanitarian initiative undertaken on the understanding that its duration would be limited. Both the High Commissioner and the World Food Programme were in touch with donors in order to obtain the necessary resources. Donors' diffidence had stemmed from uncertainty whether successful relief activities could be carried out in a continued state of insecurity in much of northern Somalia. Concern about the political situation and the wish to see more active efforts to achieve national reconciliation had also been expressed. The principal target of the Emergency Programme was the provision of 2,000 tons of food aid each month. A non-governmental organization, ELU/CARE, would assist the Somali Government in its distribution. The Emergency Programme had been faced with a number of operational and logistical difficulties since it had begun in the second half of February, resulting in delays in meeting the implementation target. The mid-term inter-agency assessment mission had therefore been advanced to the third week of March. Its appraisal exercise had been reported on at the third

(Mr. Hashim)

meeting of the Consultative Group on the Emergency Situation in the Horn of Africa, held at Nairobi in early April. The mission had determined that only just over half of the planned 2,000 tons of food had been delivered each month. Even in the best of circumstances food delivery could reach only two thirds of the original target.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had envisaged expanding its current humanitarian programmes for internally displaced persons to include refugees once the Emergency Programme ended. The ICRC programme would continue until the United Nations system was able to resume normal humanitarian assistance activities in the region. ICRC and the Somali Government had been discussing the operational arrangements required.

Many observers felt that there would be no permanent peace in northern Somalia until most of the refugees had returned to Ethiopia. Repatriation activities must therefore receive the highest priority. Registration of refugees in the north for repatriation should be facilitated, and any obstacles to their positive reception at home should be dealt with expeditiously. Donor support for that effort to achieve a lasting solution must also be ensured.

Access in order to carry out United Nations relief activities on behalf of displaced and war-affected persons was currently limited to the town of Berbera and a small area in and around the town of Boroma. The aim was to establish that there were parts of northern Somalia where security was such that United Nations staff could work and professional programme implementation and monitoring was possible. Those efforts could then be expanded into other parts of the north. So far, the signs were encouraging.

However, there were many people in need beyond the small areas that could now be reached. There was still no mechanism in place in Somalia for reaching those in need in contested areas. The ICRC was continuing its dialogue with the relevant parties to obtain such access.

The effects of conflict had also been felt strongly in the south of Somalia, where urban centres had had to absorb large numbers of displaced persons. The resulting problems were most strikingly evident at Mogadishu. The Somali Government and the United Nations would assess the problems at Mogadishu and look for ways to alleviate at least the worst problems.

Mr. OSMAN (Observer for Somalia) said that his Government was seriously concerned at the massive displacement of populations and the widespread destruction of both public and private property in the northern districts of Somalia caused by intensive attacks by armed groups in May and June 1988. It had been estimated that as a result of those attacks over 600,000 people had been internally displaced, while another 400,000 had been scattered in the countryside. In October 1988 Somalia had appealed to the international community for assistance in coping with the situation. In resolution 43/206 the General Assembly had called on all States and the competent intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to respond fully to Somali requests for emergency humanitarian rehabilitation assistance. In May 1989 the Secretary-General had appealed to the international community to provide Somalia with humanitarian rehabilitation assistance in an amount of $19.4 million to help the Government deal with the emergency situation. That appeal had been based on assessments made by the United Nations inter-agency mission referred to by the Special Co-ordinator for Emergency Relief Operations in Somalia. An additional programme of assistance would be needed for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of public services and infrastructure in the affected areas.

The Somali Government had taken a number of significant political and administrative measures to restore public confidence, strengthen protection of human rights and create a climate of national reconciliation. A general amnesty had been proclaimed in 1989 and in previous years, and a large number of political prisoners had been released. A high-level committee for resettlement and rehabilitation had been set up in order to bring about normal conditions in the affected regions, and also to mobilize and co-ordinate international assistance activities. Furthermore, the Somali Constitution would be amended in the near future so as to provide for a multi-party system, which would go into effect by the end of 1990. In March 1990 a high-level delegation had toured regions where thousands of displaced people had returned to their homes. The Committee for Resettlement and Rehabilitation, which had been reactivated, would soon visit the affected areas in order to assess the situation and recommend appropriate measures to alleviate human suffering and hardship. The Committee would continue to meet with regional authorities and representatives of local communities. Such

(Mr. Osman, Observer, Somalia)

high-level visits and contacts would help to restore normal conditions in the affected districts, thus contributing to national reconciliation.

The Somali Government was continuing its efforts to find a solution to the conflict in the northern regions of Somalia. On a number of recent occasions it had offered to open a dialogue with members of opposition groups, without setting any prior conditions. Friendly countries, including Egypt, Kuwait, the Yemen Arab Republic and Italy, had acted as intermediaries in the search for a solution to the conflict in the north. Unfortunately, however, the Government's offers had been rejected. The Government would none the less not be discouraged by such initial set-backs, and would continue its efforts to promote national reconciliation. Somalia had already taken steps to deal with the problems mentioned by the Special Co-ordinator regarding the security situation, so that the ongoing assistance provided could be more effective and reach the people concerned.

He wished to express his Government's profound appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Special Co-ordinator for their efforts to mobilize international resources to assist Somalia in coping with the emergency situation, as well as to the Governments and organizations that had already responded positively to Somalia's appeal. He wished to appeal to all States and organizations to contribute generously, on an urgent basis, in order to meet the emergency and rehabilitation needs of the displaced populations in the affected regions of Somalia.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

For participants only

E/1990/SR.6
3 May 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

First regular session of 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 3 May 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

CONTENTS

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Corrections to this record should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1990/45 and E/1990/64)

The PRESIDENT recalled that, in their letter contained in document E/1990/64, the delegations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic had proposed the inclusion of an additional item, entitled "International co-operation in the elimination of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant", in the agenda for the Council's first regular session of 1990. In addition, the Observer for Egypt had proposed that the question entitled "The revival of the Library of Alexandria" should be considered under item 1 of that agenda.

If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council wished to accept those two proposals.

It was so decided.

Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that he wished to congratulate the President of the Council on his election and to assure him of his delegation's full support.

He was grateful to the delegations which had, at the previous meeting, supported the proposal to add an item concerning the Chernobyl accident to the Council's agenda. The consensus decision on that issue attested to the fact that the tragedy at Chernobyl was international in nature. It was time for the international community and the United Nations in particular to take an active role in dealing with the consequences of that event.

Mr. NINO GOMEZ (Venezuela) said he wished to thank the delegations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic for proposing the inclusion of an additional agenda item. Although the Governments concerned had endeavoured to reduce the consequences of the accident at Chernobyl to a minimum, efforts needed to be co-ordinated and expanded under United Nations guidance.

The PRESIDENT proposed that, in the light of the decision just taken, the Council should consider the new agenda item, to be placed between existing items 6 and 7 and entitled "International co-operation in the elimination of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant", and the new question under agenda item 1 entitled "The revival of the Library of Alexandria", at a future plenary meeting. The precise date would be decided later.

If he heard no objections, he would take it that the Council was in agreement with those suggestions.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

For participants only

E/1990/SR.7
11 May 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

First regular session of 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 9 May 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

CONTENTS

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (continued)

Corrections to this record should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (E/1990/20 and Add.1) (continued)

Mr. HENNESSY (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the twelve States members of the European Community, said that, notwithstanding the impressive array of international instruments which had been adopted by the United Nations for the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, instances of racial discrimination continued to occur in every country. Governments bore the primary responsibility for initiating and pursuing policies to tackle the problem. Experience suggested that the most effective approach was one which combined legislation with an effective programme of education to eradicate deep-rooted prejudices and irrational hostility based on ignorance and fear.

The report of the Secretary-General (E/1990/20 and Add.1) described an extensive range of activities directed against the many facets of racism at the national, regional and international levels. The Twelve welcomed the publication of the Global Compilation of National Legislation against Racism and Racial Discrimination and noted that work on a collection of model legislation was in hand. The preparation of a handbook of recourse procedures for victims of racial discrimination was another very practical measure. The Twelve also welcomed the priority given to projects in the field of education and training.

Over the past year the Twelve had continued their support for activities under the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Several member States had made important financial contributions to the Trust Fund and had participated in meetings convened under the Programme including, in particular, the United Nations seminar on cultural dialogue between the countries of origin and the host countries of migrant workers and the seminar on education against apartheid organized by the NGO community.

(Mr. Hennessy, Ireland)

The capacity of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) to discharge its mandate to monitor compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination had been impaired by serious financial difficulties because of the failure of a number of countries to meet their financial obligations. In each of the last three years one of its two scheduled meetings had been cancelled because of financial constraints. The Twelve accordingly strongly urged all countries in default to meet the financial obligations they had freely assumed on ratifying the Convention. In that connection the Twelve again reaffirmed their readiness to study all ideas, including those contained in resolution 1990/25 of the Commission on Human Rights, which would enable CERD and other human rights supervisory bodies to fulfil their mandates.

Only in South Africa had discrimination been elevated to the level of a constitutional principle in the form of apartheid which remained the most abhorrent form of racial discrimination. The Twelve reaffirmed their determination to pursue policies aimed at the complete elimination of apartheid by peaceful means and were committed, as reflected in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly, to maintain pressure on South Africa until there was clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes in that country. The Twelve agreed that they could engage in cultural and scientific co-operation on the understanding that their objective in doing so was to contribute to the ending of apartheid.

The Twelve welcomed the release of Nelson Mandela and other positive steps taken by the South African Government as representing a significant contribution to the establishment of a climate conducive to genuine negotiations with the black community. They reiterated their call for the lifting by the South African Government of the state of emergency and for the release of all political prisoners in South Africa; they noted the commitment given by President De Klerk to that end. The recent mission at the ministerial level by the European Community to South Africa had served to encourage the launching of a national dialogue for the eradication of apartheid through negotiation. They hoped that the dialogue between

(Mr. Hennessy, Ireland)

President De Klerk and the representatives of the African National Congress would make an important contribution to that process.

Miss BOUMAIZA (Algeria) said that the discussion on the item under consideration had acquired a new dimension as a consequence of the recent accession of Namibia to independence and the dialogue instituted between the South African Government and representatives of the African National Congress. She hoped that the dialogue, which had become possible as a consequence of the armed resistance of the South African people to the system of apartheid and of intensified international political pressure and economic sanctions against South Africa, would shortly lead to negotiations for the adoption by South Africa of a new constitution which would forever ban the system of apartheid. Her delegation was convinced that the international community must remain mobilized for the purpose of achieving the total elimination of apartheid and all forms of racial discrimination.

The need for joint efforts for the elimination of racial discrimination was especially great in the face of the resurgence of racism in a number of European countries where certain elements were taking advantage of the continuing economic crisis to exacerbate tensions between different communities. Her delegation reiterated its full support for the Programme of Action for the Second Decade, for the appeal of the Special Committee against Apartheid urging the international community to maintain pressure on South Africa to end apartheid and for the recent resolution of the Commission on Human Rights calling for an intensification of the struggle against racism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

Her delegation also supported the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to consider, at each future session, a particular theme selected from its plan of action for 1990-1993. It regretted the decision to cancel yet another session of CERD. Algeria had always paid its own contributions and called upon other States parties to the Convention to settle their financial obligations, including arrears, to enable the Committee to function normally.

Algeria had participated in the United Nations seminar on cultural dialogue between the countries of origin and the host countries of migrant workers and had noted that the General Assembly, at its forty-fourth session, had requested the Secretary-General to give the report of the seminar wide distribution.

(Miss Boumaiza, Algeria)

In connection with the legal aspects of the struggle against racism and racial discrimination, article 28 of the Algerian Constitution prohibited any form of discrimination, based on birth, race, sex, opinion or any personal or social condition or circumstance. At the international level, Algeria had ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Because of its substantial emigrant community, Algeria could not remain indifferent to the rising tide of racism in Europe. In that connection her delegation considered that the working group established 10 years previously to prepare a draft international convention for the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and their families should complete the draft in time for submission to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

Mr. BOUTET (France) said that his Government had taken resolute action against all manifestations of racism and xenophobia. Regulations for the suppression of such manifestations had been strengthened and the responsibilities of public officials in that connection had been further refined and developed.

Suppression in itself was not sufficient; prevention was also necessary. The competent public departments had established flexible and forward-looking mechanisms with a view to encouraging the efforts of individuals and groups active in promoting respect and understanding for others in all categories of the population, particularly the least-favoured or most vulnerable sectors, such as migrant workers.

France's policy in that area was guided by three major factors: effective efforts by the public authorities; enhanced support for organizations combating racism; and priority for the campaign against the spread of racism.

France reaffirmed its determination to play a leading role in ensuring the effective implementation of the entire Programme of Action for the Second Decade according to the timetable which had been established.

Apartheid represented one of the most flagrant and massive violations of human rights and dignity. Its total abolition must continue to be a high priority for the entire international community. His Government strongly supported the

(Mr. Boutet, France)

initiatives taken by President De Klerk to end the entire system of discrimination in South Africa and welcomed the results of the first meetings between the Government of South Africa and the African National Congress. The dialogue must lead to the introduction of a political and social system in which the whole of the South African population, without exception, could enjoy their rights and freedoms to the full.

As yet none of the basic laws underlying apartheid had been abolished. Moreover, there had been an alarming increase in violence in several provinces in recent months. His country therefore intended to continue to exercise pressure on the South African authorities. It was opposed to the lifting of restricting on trade with that country and was resolved to intensify its support for organizations campaigning for the abolition of apartheid such as the African National Congress, churches and humanitarian associations active in South Africa.

His delegation hoped that serious consideration would be given to means of overcoming the difficulties faced by CERD, which had been handicapped in recent years by the lack of financial resources.

It was also the view of France that those States which were not yet Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination should accede to it without delay. His delegation also urged States parties to the Convention which had failed to pay their annual contributions to the Committee to fulfil the obligation which they had contracted when they had ratified the Convention. The current method for financing the Committee must however be reformed. The General Assembly had stressed that need during its last two sessions and the States Parties to the Convention had themselves expressed such a view during their meeting on 16 January 1990 when a number of specific proposals had been presented, including, in particular, one for a different apportionment of the costs of the Committee among the members.

Mr. SOMAVIA (Observer for Chile) said that the new Government which had recently taken office in his country, was clear and unequivocal in its condemnation of all forms of racism and racial discrimination, particularly the infamous system of apartheid. Such sentiments were deeply rooted in the minds and history of the Chilean people.

(Mr. Somavia, Observer, Chile)

His delegation reiterated its support for the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa and endorsed the position endorsed the position upheld by the majority of the people of South Africa, namely, that the outcome of the process of negotiations should be an end to the apartheid system and a new constitutional order determined by those people and based on the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In the new Chile, the constitutional guarantees of personal freedom and the inalienable rights of the individual ensured the equality of all citizens before the law. In particular, the Civil Code firmly rejected all forms of discrimination.

His Government attached special importance to the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, to which it had recently made a voluntary contribution.

After a long and painful hiatus in Chile's foreign policy, his Government wished to strengthen its ties with the countries of Africa and hoped to explore with them formulas for co-operation which would be mutually advantageous.

The United Nations would not have completed its task so long as apartheid persisted. The democratic régime in Chile would not slacken its efforts until that abominable system had disappeared from the face of the earth.

MR. GALAL (Observer for Egypt) said that the past year had witnessed important developments in the struggle against racial discrimination. They included the sixteenth Special Session of the General Assembly on Apartheid and its concluding declaration, the establishment of Namibia as an independent State and the rapprochement between blacks and enlightened whites in South Africa, which had kindled the hope that a non-discriminatory, non-racial society would be established in South Africa in the near future. His delegation welcomed the agreement reached between the South African Government and the African National Congress reflected in document A/45/268.

Elsewhere in the world, the Palestinian people continued to suffer oppression at the hands of the Israeli authorities and to be deprived of its rights to self-determination, security, stability, education and life itself on its own national soil. Killings and detentions were perpetrated daily in Israeli and Arab territories and must be rejected and condemned by all civilized and peace-loving peoples.

(Mr. Galal, Observer, Egypt)

There was no chosen people and no race was superior to another. It was essential that the United Nations Centre for Human Rights take steps to initiate a concentrated campaign to eliminate such obsolete concepts which had led to many catastrophes during the history of mankind.

A review of documents E/1990/20 and Add.1 indicated that only 14 out of 160 Member States had responded to the request of the General Assembly, contained in paragraph 10 of its resolution 39/16, to forward a report every two years on action taken under the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The fact that so few States had responded was clear evidence that a more concentrated campaign was needed against States that practised or tolerated racial discrimination or that proclaimed the superiority of any given political or religious group.

The Constitution of Egypt provided for the complete equality of all citizens in respect of rights and obligations. Article 8 guaranteed equal treatment by the State in the provision of opportunities to citizens while article 22 provided for punishment for discrimination against any party.

Mr. SIGURDSSON (Observer for Iceland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that racism and racial discrimination remained a problem of global dimensions and that greater emphasis must be placed on public information activities, particularly in view of the opportunities afforded by the improved political climate.

The Nordic countries had always insisted on the need to put an end to the apartheid system by peaceful means and to establish a just, non-racial and democratic society in South Africa. While acknowledging that the reforms recently announced by the South African President and the release of Nelson Mandela constituted positive developments, they hoped that the South African Government would realize that nothing less than the total abolition of apartheid would meet the aspirations of the black majority. They believed that it would be premature, as yet, to lift their economic sanctions against South Africa, but they had agreed to review their joint guidelines on mandatory visas for citizens of South Africa, with a view to promoting wider contacts.

A dialogue required a climate of mutual confidence. Accordingly, the South African Government should release all political prisoners and detainees

(Mr. Sigurdsson, Observer, Iceland)

unconditionally and lift the state of emergency. The importance of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) maintaining its openness to discussion should also be stressed.

The Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa provided a useful framework for a negotiated settlement leading to the eradication of the apartheid system.

With the completion of the final steps in the process leading to Namibia's independence, which had demonstrated to South Africa and to the world the feasibility of peaceful, democratic and negotiated change, the Nordic countries had withdrawn the economic measures imposed on Namibia under South African rule, and looked forward to the launching of wide-ranging co-operation for development with Namibia.

It was paradoxical that the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was still hampered by financial difficulties. States parties to the Convention had a collective responsibility to ensure that CERD had a sound financial basis and to submit timely, comprehensive and accurate reports to it.

Mr. VALLENILLA (Venezuela) said that the system of apartheid set up by the racist South African Government was one of the most humiliating forms of discrimination. Although the international community had recently rejoiced in the release of Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, the unbanning of ANC and the South African Government's stated commitment to negotiations, further steps were needed and the international community must continue to monitor the situation closely. The parties to the conflict should negotiate a peaceful settlement with full respect for universally accepted principles, such as sovereignty of the people and the protection of human rights.

Turning to the report of the Secretary-General (E/1990/20 and Add.1), he expressed concern at the deplorable financial situation affecting CERD as a result of the failure of Member States to pay their outstanding contributions, welcomed the fact that, as at 31 December 1989, there had been 88 States Parties to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and noted the contribution of United Nations specialized agencies,

(Mr. Vallenilla, Venezuela)

particularly the International Labour Organisation and non-governmental organizations to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Finally, he expressed satisfaction at being able to welcome a free and independent Namibia as a Member of the United Nations.

Mr. STANEVSKI (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that it was appropriate to highlight the campaign against racism and racial discrimination; those evils stood in contradiction to every human right and fundamental freedom embodied in the basic documents of the United Nations. While countries and peoples were unanimous in their rejection of racism, they differed when it came to discussing what was the best means of combating that evil.

His delegation attached importance to the report of the Secretary-General (E/1990/20 and Add.1), which contained a number of concrete proposals and guidelines for the period 1990-1993, especially concerning information, education and the implementation of international instruments. It also supported the efforts undertaken by the Co-ordinator for the Second Decade.

He had followed with keen interest the recent promising developments in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and had welcomed the holding of the first free elections in Namibia. At the same time, however, racism had appeared in other regions. In view of the dangers posed by the doctrines of national superiority and hatred, it was necessary for the world community to give serious attention to the implementation of the Programme of Action. The activities of non-governmental organizations were necessary to the achievement of the objectives of the Second Decade, and should be commended.

As the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was fast approaching, he urged all the permanent members of the Security Council to accede to the Convention and make its acceptance truly universal.

It would be dangerous for anyone to delude himself into thinking that manifestations of racism could be dealt with in a short period of time. In an interdependent world, in which national problems could easily spread beyond national borders, there was all the more reason for joint efforts to implement the Programme of Action.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

PROVISIONAL

For participants only

E/1990/SR.8
15 May 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Organizational session of 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 10 May 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GHAREKHAN (India)

CONTENTS

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (continued)

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (continued)

Corrections to this record should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued) (E/1990/20 and Add.1)

Mr. PASHKEVICH (Observer for the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that Namibia's attainment of independence was proof of the enormous potential of the United Nations, and his delegation hoped that the Centre against Apartheid and the Special Committee against Apartheid would soon complete their mandates. The decision by the South African Government to release a number of political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, had been welcomed by the international community. The release of anti-apartheid activists in South Africa had been the logical outcome of the broad international campaign of solidarity with the struggling black majority of South Africa. The Byelorussian SSR agreed with the Special Committee against Apartheid that all members of the international community should take measures to compel South Africa to dismantle apartheid. Methods for exerting such pressure should include international isolation of South Africa and the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions. The continuing violations of human rights in South Africa and the detention, torture and other inhuman treatment of opponents of apartheid, including children, required increased international pressure with a view to eradicating that criminal policy and practice. The Byelorussian SSR provided moral and material support to South African liberation movements in their struggle against apartheid, and it maintained no relations whatsoever with the Pretoria régime.

The active and universal participation of the States Members of the United Nations in all stages of the preparation and adoption of international standards should, logically, be followed by universal accession to United Nations conventions and covenants. One might well ask why, 20 years after the adoption of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, approximately 25 States Members had as yet not become parties to it, and why,

(Mr. Pashkevich, Observer, Byelorussian SSR)

14 years after the adoption of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, only 90 States had acceded to it. The number of States which had ratified the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports did not come near the number of countries which participated in international sporting events. The relevant United Nations bodies and secretariat units and the Co-ordinator for the Second Decade should encourage Member States to accede to existing instruments.

His delegation expressed concern that, because of financial difficulties, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had not been able to hold its regularly scheduled session. The United Nations should consider financing the Committee's activities from its regular budget, which would be in keeping with the Organization's responsibility to ensure the effective implementation of its standards.

Mr. DING Yuanhong (China), noting that 21 December 1990 would mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, called for an early solution to the financial problems of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. His delegation also noted the progress made in the preparation of the Global Compilation of National Legislation against Racism and Racial Discrimination and the collection of model legislation.

From the report of the Secretary-General (E/1990/20), it was evident that the co-ordination of activities for the Second Decade had been further strengthened. Sufficient financial provision must be made in the programme budgets for the bienniums 1990-1991 and 1992-1993 for the implementation of the activities relating to the Second Decade, as requested in resolution 1989/9 of the Commission on Human Rights.

His delegation welcomed the reform measures introduced by the South African authorities, including the release of Nelson Mandela and other political activists and the lifting of the ban on anti-apartheid organizations such as the African National Congress of South Africa. However, the continued "state of emergency" and use of police force against anti-apartheid demonstrators attested to the fact that South African policies had not fundamentally changed. Rather than ease the pressure on South African authorities, the international community must step up its

(Mr. Ding Yuanhong, China)

assistance to national liberation movements and the front-line States by adopting more effective measures and maintaining the sanctions in force.

Mrs. NIKOLIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that with the improvement in the general international climate, the campaign against racism, racial discrimination and apartheid had entered a new phase. Her delegation welcomed the publication of the Global Compilation of National Legislation against Racism and Racial Discrimination, and the work being done on model legislation and a handbook of resource procedures for victims of racial discrimination.

Her delegation also welcomed the Second Decade's continued emphasis on the struggle against apartheid. In South Africa, the release of Nelson Mandela, the lifting of the ban on ANC and the discussions between an ANC delegation and the South African Government the week before were highly significant. The entire international community expected Pretoria to take measures favourable to the start of negotiations and should continue to isolate the South African régime until it did so. Those measures were clearly spelled out in the 1989 Harare Declaration of the Organization of African Unity, endorsed by the Belgrade summit meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa adopted by consensus at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly in December 1989.

It was regrettable that in a year which marked an anniversary for both the International Convention on the Elimination on All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee's March session had been cancelled because of the failure of States parties to pay their assessed contributions. That reflected a lack of political commitment to the basic human rights enshrined in the Convention. In the light of its special role in promoting the implementation of human rights instruments, the United Nations, and its Member States, bore responsibility for ensuring that the Committee's current financial problems were addressed. Her delegation noted with interest resolution 1990/25 of the Commission on Human Rights, concerning the effective functioning of bodies established pursuant to United Nations human rights instruments, particularly paragraphs 7 to 10. Her delegation was open to all proposals whch might enable the Committee and other human rights supervisory bodies to fulfil their mandates.

(Mrs. Nikolić, Yugoslavia)

Priority must also be given to completing work on the international convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and their families so that it could be adopted by the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Her delegation welcomed the results of the United Nations seminar on cultural dialogue between the countries of origin and the host countries of migrant workers, held in Athens in September 1989.

Her delegation noted with satisfaction the progress achieved by the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-sixth session on the draft Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and supported the work of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in that area. Guaranteeing equal rights and opportunities to minorities was an important factor in relations between neighbouring States. In the current international climate, there would be fewer political and ideological obstacles to dealing with the problems of minorities. The protection and promotion of the rights of minorities were particularly important in the context of co-operation in Europe and in the Balkan region.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had always regarded racism and racial discrimination as anachronistic and a disgrace to civilization. At the Belgrade Summit Meeting, the non-aligned countries had stressed the role to be played by the international community in combating racism and other forms of intolerance.

Mr. KIM Jae Hon (Observer for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea) congratulated Namibia on its independence; that, and the release of Nelson Mandela, were outstanding achievements of the struggle against racism carried on by the peoples of Namibia and South Africa, and by the entire international community.

The fact that racism and racial discrimination persisted in certain parts of the world, particularly in South Africa - despite all the efforts by the United Nations and the international community - was deplorable. The elimination of the apartheid system in South Africa remained the most urgent task before the world community, for apartheid was a human rights violation of the most pernicious variety. His delegation was committed to the elimination of racism and racial discrimination in all its forms, particularly apartheid. It had supported all United Nations activities and resolutions aimed at the elimination of apartheid. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea maintained no diplomatic, political,

(Mr. Kim Jae Hon, Observer, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

commercial, sports or cultural contacts with the racist régime in South Africa and condemned that Government's policies. During the Second Decade, his Government had taken a number of measures in support of international efforts to end apartheid, including the award of the Freedom and Independence Order (First Class) of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to Nelson Mandela; the establishment of the Korean Committee against Apartheid; the organization of various events in solidarity with ANC and the South African people; the dissemination of information on United Nations activities in the area; and increased assistance to the liberation movements and States in southern Africa.

His delegation welcomed the adoption of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa by the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly. It continued to believe that comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against the Pretoria régime were the most effective means of eliminating apartheid. It condemned the recent brutal suppression and murder of black demonstrators by the racist South African régime and called on the international community to raise its voice in protest. In conclusion, his delegation wished to commend the Centre against Apartheid and other bodies for their role in combating racism and racial discrimination and eliminating apartheid.

Miss ROBERTS (Jamaica) said that racism denied human beings the most basic and universally accepted human right - the right to self-affirmation. Racism had been denounced in many international instruments, from the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports. The Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination accorded the highest priority to combating apartheid in South Africa; providing assistance to the victims of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid; and dealing with the plight of other vulnerable groups such as migrant workers, the children of minorities and indigenous peoples. Indeed, racism, racial discrimination and apartheid continued to pose a major threat to human relations.

Her delegation was encouraged by recent developments in South Africa, particularly the release of Nelson Mandela, the lifting of the ban on ANC and the

(Miss Roberts, Jamaica)

steps taken recently by President de Klerk to pave the way for black-white negotiations. Undoubtedly, pressure by the international community, including economic sanctions, had contributed to the process. Such pressure must be applied until the apartheid system was completely abolished. As yet, there was no evidence of a profound, irreversible change in South Africa. Sanctions must not be lifted or relaxed until there was meaningful progress towards the drafting of a new constitution based on the commonly accepted democratic principle of one man, one vote.

Her delegation welcomed the independence of Namibia, long overdue, and commended the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) on its role in the process. Namibia's independence testified to the effectiveness of co-ordinated international pressure. All possible economic assistance must be granted for the reconstruction of Namibia.

As recommended in General Assembly resolution 42/47, sufficient additional resources must be allocated for the implementation of the activities outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (E/1990/20) in the bienniums 1990-1991 and 1992-1993. Her delegation was once again compelled to express its deep concern over the disruption of the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the cancellation of the commemorative session earlier in the year.

Her delegation appreciated the successful programmes undertaken by the Centre against Apartheid, the Special Committee against Apartheid and the Council for Namibia. It was encouraged by the increased co-ordination between those bodies and the Centre on Transnational Corporations and noted with satisfaction the important contribution of the Commission on Human Rights, particularly its decision to give thematic consideration each year to a selected topic within the plan of activities for 1990-1993. The activities of the specialized agencies in combating racism and racial discrimination should also be recognized and encouraged.

Her delegation wished to commend the effective approach of the Co-ordinator for the Second Decade, which included the establishment of linkages with other United Nations offices; the dissemination of information in order to mobilize public support for the objectives of the Decade; and enhanced co-operation with non-governmental organizations. The problems of migrant workers and the

(Miss Roberts, Jamaica)

international convention being drafted on that question deserved full support. In conclusion, as a country which strictly upheld the principle of non-discrimination in its own legal system and had ratified all the international instruments repudiating racism, racial discrimination and apartheid, Jamaica would continue to support the efforts of the United Nations towards that end.

Mr. KUKAN (Czechoslovakia) said that, despite the achievements of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the danger of racism had not receded. Unequal relations among nationals of one country, discrimination against migrant workers or immigrants and open manifestations of racial animosity continued to pose a threat to human rights and could not be tolerated or disregarded. Regrettably, there was sometimes a considerable discrepancy between the declarations made by some countries on the need to impose economic and other sanctions against the South African régime and the profits which their transnational corporations derived from co-operation with that country.

His country welcomed certain positive changes in the policy of the South African Government and hoped that apartheid in that country would be gradually eliminated. In particular, it had welcomed the release from prison of Mr. Nelson Mandela and the lifting of the ban on a number of opposition parties and movements, the elimination of censorship imposed on the mass media and the suspended execution of the death penalty. Even more encouraging were the results of the first round of talks between the South African Government and representatives of ANC. Unfortunately, the human rights situation of the majority of the South African population had not changed significantly. In the period following the Second Decade, the international community would have to consider more effective means of exerting pressure on South Africa in order to speed up the dismantling of apartheid and the eradication of racial prejudices. The most significant achievement of international co-operation in that area in recent times had been the achievement of Namibian independence. The key factors had been the strong international pressure on the South African Government and the political will shown by all parties concerned, including South Africa, to resolve that long-standing problem.

His country participated actively in international efforts to eradicate racism and to implement the Programme of Action to Combat Racism and Racial

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

Discrimination. It honoured all its obligations resulting from its accession to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the Convention against Apartheid in Sports.

Racism and racial hatred were growing stronger even in the most economically advanced countries. The growth of violence against and hatred towards migrant workers and minorities motivated by racial prejudices was alarming. That phenomenon could neither be overlooked nor underestimated.

Mr. MOHAMMED (Iraq), said that recent improvements in international relations should be conducive to peaceful solutions to regional disputes, particularly in South Africa. The measures recommended by the Special Committee against Apartheid should form the basis for negotiations between the Pretoria Government and leaders of the black majority. The Special Committee had also emphasized the responsibility of the international community to continue to exert pressure on the apartheid régime. In that connection, international sanctions continued to represent an important instrument. That point had been stressed in resolution 1990/13 of the Commission on Human Rights. It was therefore the duty of the international community to make every effort to dismantle the entire apartheid system in South Africa. With the achievement of Namibian independence, there was a need to step up efforts to help the South African people to realize their aspirations in the face of the continuing efforts of the racist régime to perpetuate the apartheid system.

There was co-operation between the racist régimes of Tel Aviv and Pretoria in all fields, including the nuclear field. Tel Aviv continued to pursue its racist policy, rejecting all peace proposals while denying the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and depriving them of their right to return to their own land. The Zionist authorities were now settling Soviet Jews in the occupied territories.

Iraq, for its part, had ratified the two International Covenants on Human Rights, as well as the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports. Articles 1 and 19 of the Constitution of Iraq stipulated that all citizens were equal before the law without distinction. Iraq had no relations with the

(Mr. Mohammed, Iraq)

racist régime of South Africa and had participated in all United Nations efforts to enable Namibia to achieve its independence. It would implement fully the entire Programme of Action for the Second Decade and all relevant United Nations resolutions.

Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) expressed the high regard of his delegation for the role played by the United Nations in its efforts to eliminate racial discrimination and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms. His Government was helping to foster peaceful change in southern Africa by providing assistance to the victims of apartheid; it had extended its co-operation with the United Nations funds for South Africa and Namibia and had also strengthened its support of the Kagiso Trust, a non-governmental organization concerned with the situation in South Africa.

Japan was also expanding its economic assistance to those countries in southern Africa which were trying to reduce their economic dependence on South Africa. In that connection, Japan's assistance to the nine States members of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference had increased dramatically from $120 million in 1986 to $270 million in 1988. In addition, Japan had stepped up its political dialogue with the countries of southern Africa, receiving visits from the Presidents of Zimbabwe and the United Republic of Tanzania in recent years. Japan was firmly committed to the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its special session on apartheid and its destructive consequences.

Since 1986, Japan had contributed to the Trust Fund for the Programme of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and would do so again in 1990. The Japanese business community was collecting contributions to assist the people of South Africa while, at the end of November 1989, members of the Japanese Diet had formed the Parliamentarians' Anti-Apartheid League and, in January 1990, the Regional Seminar on East Asian Action against Apartheid had been held in Tokyo under the auspices of the United Nations. Those efforts demonstrated the ever-increasing awareness of, and opposition to, apartheid among the people of Japan.

Japan had for a long time past urged the Government of South Africa to take tangible steps to eradicate apartheid so that negotiations could be started for the establishment of a non-racial democratic South Africa. It therefore welcomed the dramatic changes which had taken place in South Africa since the speech by

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

President de Klerk on 2 February. The preliminary talks between the South African Government and ANC from 2 to 4 May to discuss obstacles to the commencement of negotiations had also represented a historic beginning. It was the hope of his Government that full-fledged negotiations on the establishment of new democratic institutions would follow.

Mrs. ASHTON (Observer for Bolivia) expressed the view that, in order to eliminate racism and racial discrimination, new ideas were required which would stimulate a change of attitudes in the direction of the moral values and social and political principles enshrined in the various international human rights instruments and, in particular, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Bowing to international pressure, the Government of Pretoria had recently adopted a number of measures, but, unfortunately, it had not gone far enough. The release of Nelson Mandela was a positive development. The accession of Namibia to independence as a free and sovereign State represented a real triumph of justice and freedom over oppression and discrimination. The creation of Namibia was a symbol of the hopes and aspirations of the developing countries for the building of a better world for all. The majority in South Africa, with the support of the international community, was beginning to get a glimpse of changes which would certainly bring about the final abolition of apartheid and all forms of racial discrimination.

Her delegation reiterated its support for the Programme of Action for the Second Decade and the activities planned for the period 1990-1993, in particular, the international campaign to remove obstacles to the elimination of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

There was a need to intensify efforts to give wider and more effective publicity to the evils of racism, particularly apartheid and its consequences and to the Declaration on apartheid and its destructive consequences adopted by the General Assembly at its recent special session.

It was clear from the report of the Secretary-General that, although much had been done, at both the national and the international levels, there was still a long way to go. Her delegation nevertheless expressed the hope that the joint efforts of the international community would achieve the goal of eliminating

(Mrs. Ashton, Observer, Bolivia)

racism, racial discrimination and apartheid and establishing the widest possible respect for human rights.

Mr. MOHIUDDIN (Observer for Bangladesh) said that the total eradication of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid and the removal of their root cause was a sine qua non for a civilized and secure world. The proclamation of a Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination immediately after the first reflected the determination of the international community to undertake comprehensive measures to counter those evils. The dismantling of apartheid was among the highest priorities of the Second Decade.

Bangladesh had consistently condemned the policies of apartheid and had supported the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa under Chapter VII of the Charter in the belief that such a measure would be the most effective means of eradicating apartheid. It had been argued that sanctions would increase the sufferings of the black majority. That majority, however, was willing to undergo hardship for the sake of a better future with dignity, honour and equality.

Recently there had been hopes that President de Klerk's Government might effect some substantive changes, but it was a matter for regret that the steps taken by the Government did not go beyond cosmetic changes.

Israel's repressive and brutal policies against the Palestinian people represented one of the worst manifestations of discrimination and constituted a blatant violation of human rights. Bangladesh remained convinced that a just and lasting solution in the Middle East region would be possible only when the Palestinian people were able to exercise their right to self-determination and an independent Palestinian State had been established. It believed that efforts to achieve a just and durable solution should culminate in the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. In the proposed conference, the PLO must participate on an equal footing with all parties concerned as it was the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Bangladesh was a party to both the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. Both instruments were crucial and fundamental to efforts to eliminate racial discrimination and promote equality. His delegation urged

(Mr. Mohiuddin, Observer, Bangladesh)

those States which had not yet ratified or acceded to those conventions to do so as soon as possible as the widest universal adherence to those instruments would help to intensify the struggle against racism. It was a matter of concern to all that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had been unable to function owing to lack of funds. That untenable situation must be redressed.

Over the years the United Nations had contributed significantly to the strengthening of the principle of equality and the defence of human rights. His delegation commended the activities of the Centre against Apartheid and the Special Committee against Apartheid for their role in mobilizing and strengthening world public opinion against the apartheid régime. The role of non-governmental organizations also deserved the highest appreciation.

The Government of Bangladesh had made modest contributions to the United Nations trust funds set up to alleviate the sufferings of the people of South Africa. It reaffirmed its unwavering support for the valiant people of South Africa in their just struggle to achieve the goal of a democratic and multi-racial South Africa.

Dame Ann HERCUS (New Zealand) said that her delegation was encouraged by the recent positive developments in South Africa. However, apartheid was founded on powerful legislative acts which remained entrenched in South African law. Sanctions were a powerful tool to encourage South Africa to dismantle apartheid and allow its black population to participate in the political process.

The year 1990 marked the 150th anniversary of the Treaty of Waitangi between the indigenous Maori people and the British Crown. The anniversary afforded New Zealanders an opportunity to reflect on the original spirit in which the treaty had been signed and their current and future responsibilities to one another. New Zealand was committed to achieving a true partnership between the Government and the Maori people, and had embarked on a process of devolving certain powers to the Maori people.

The Programme of Action for the Second Decade was a comprehensive set of strategies for the international community and should also help Governments set their own agendas for action. It was important that the many different activities undertaken by the diverse United Nations bodies should be well co-ordinated and monitored. The Global Consultations on Racism and Racial Discrimination, held at Geneva in 1988, had provided practical, action-oriented suggestions.

(Dame Ann Hercus, New Zealand)

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was still struggling with inadequate resources and had recently been forced to cancel its first session of 1990 and a meeting to commemorate the anniversary of the Committee's founding. It was to be hoped that that unfortunate situation would not affect the Committee, in the future, or for any other United Nations activities in the international campaign against racism.

Mr. ARROSPIDE (Observer for Peru) said that, as a multi-cultural society, his country had always rejected all forms of racism and racial discrimination, and had consistently supported efforts to eliminate the inhuman system of apartheid. Accordingly, it had never maintained diplomatic relations with the racist South African Government, and had complied with the various sanctions imposed by the international community on the Pretoria régime.

Within the framework of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, his country had consistently supported all the international instruments which condemned South Africa and racism. It had also been a founding member of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, and was the only Latin American member of the Special Committee against Apartheid. He stressed the urgency of establishing a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa, governed by the strictest respect for human rights and the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Having contributed a contingent to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group in Namibia, Peru paid a tribute to the heroic people of that country on the achievement of independence.

Having noted with interest the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action (E/1990/20 and Add.1), he drew attention to the efforts undertaken by the Centre against Apartheid, the Group of Three under the Apartheid Convention, and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. His country would continue to support those mechanisms and all steps taken by the international community to put an end to the abhorrent practices of apartheid.

As in many other countries, certain groups in Peruvian society had suffered some discrimination. Such discrimination, however, was essentially rooted in the economic inequalities which continued to hold back his country's development. Race

(Mr. Arrospide, Observer, Peru)

as such had never been a cause of political, social or cultural discrimination, and no Peruvian Government had ever officially upheld a policy which might be described as racially discriminatory. On the contrary, throughout Peru's history, its legislation had always protected human rights. His country remained firmly committed to the struggle against racism and racial discrimination wherever they occurred.

Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the elimination of apartheid was the corner-stone of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The Ukrainian SSR had welcomed the release from prison of a number of anti-apartheid activists, including Nelson Mandela, and the lifting of the ban on a number of anti-apartheid organizations, in particular ANC. The talks between the delegation of ANC and South Africa were encouraging. At the current decisive stage in the struggle for a democratic and non-racist South African State, full use must be made of international mechanisms, in particular the United Nations.

The Ukrainian SSR was a member of the Special Committee against Apartheid, the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa and the Chairman of the Group of Three to consider reports of States on the implementation of the Convention against Apartheid, and contributed constructively to United Nations activities in support of the speedy elimination of apartheid.

The sixteenth special session of the General Assembly had worked out a broad programme for the peaceful settlement of the situation in South Africa and the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic State in that country. While the people of South Africa would themselves decide the fate of their country, the international community should provide all possible assistance for the just solution of the problem. Sanctions continued to be the most effective peaceful means of exerting pressure on the Pretoria régime.

The elimination of apartheid, while important, should not be the only concern of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Any manifestation of racism or racial intolerance was completely unacceptable. The Ukrainian SSR had been prompt in its submission of reports on the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures which it had taken in

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and it adhered strictly to the provisions of the Convention. The Ukrainian SSR scrupulously fulfilled its obligations to the various United Nations bodies which dealt with the elimination of racism and racial discrimination.

Only persistent and practical measures would lead to the eradication of the inhuman policy and practice of racism and racial discrimination, and the decisions of the Economic and Social Council should play an important role in overcoming racial inequality. The Ukrainian SSR was prepared to further that objective through every means at its disposal.

Mr. SOTIROV (Bulgaria) said that Bulgaria had always taken an active part in the international community's efforts to eradicate racism and racial discrimination. No country had a perfect human rights record and no society was totally immune to occurrences of racial discrimination. In that respect, the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was of particular importance. Bulgaria welcomed the publication of the Global Compilation of National Legislation against Racism and Racial Discrimination.

The anachronistic practice of apartheid in South Africa stood in stark contrast to the generally improved international climate. Bulgaria had always expressed its solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of South Africa for the complete elimination of the apartheid system and the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic state in that country, and it hoped that the recent positive steps in South Africa, in particular the release of Nelson Mandela and the beginning of talks between ANC and the South African Government, would lead to the dismantling of apartheid and to the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by all the people of South Africa.

It was particularly important for all States to accede to and comply strictly with the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Bulgaria fully supported the valuable work of the Group of Three under the Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

Urgent steps must be taken to overcome the serious financial difficulties experienced by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, whose work was important and should continue. In addition to the timely and full payment of assessed contributions by all States parties to the Convention, other possible means of financing the Committee should be considered.

Mr. MENON (India) said that the recent admission of Namibia to the United Nations showed that the bastions of racism were crumbling. Even in South Africa, change was inexorable. The Pretoria régime had been forced by domestic and international pressure to come to the negotiating table. However, apartheid continued to cast its shadow over the country. The international community could not afford to reduce its pressure on South Africa; sanctions must be maintained until apartheid was rooted out and the majority in South Africa was able to exercise its legitimate rights.

The campaign against racism and racial discrimination must continue world wide and must include actions ranging from ratification of the various instruments in the field to public information activities and assistance to the victims of racism. Funding was a prerequisite for those endeavours. Adequate resources should be provided for the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and the various United Nations bodies working to promote its objectives. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which was facing financial difficulties, deserved particular support.

The process in Namibia had demonstrated that the United Nations, backed by the moral and material strength of its Members, could play a catalytic role in securing the rights of oppressed peoples. He hoped that the same spirit of unity, purposefulness and concrete support would guide the struggle against the remnants - or the recrudescence - of racism and racial discrimination in certain parts of the world. In that regard, the efforts of the Co-ordinator for the Second Decade deserved commendation and support.

With the twenty-fifth anniversary of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination approaching, 1990 appeared to be an appropriate year in which to strengthen the international community's struggle against race-based policies and practices.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia) said that, since its inception, the United Nations had worked with dedication and vigour to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights. While manifestations of racism and racial discrimination persisted throughout the world, 40 years of struggle had brought about a nearly universal recognition that no society could achieve true harmony or development without ridding itself of racial bias. The most virulent form of racism, apartheid, had been declared a crime against humanity, and its elimination remained among the foremost concerns of the international community. The Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination would come to an end in three years, and it was a moral imperative to ensure that the Programme of Action continued to be implemented beyond the time allotted.

Among the activities referred to in the report of the Secretary-General (E/1990/20 and Add.1), he had taken note of the efforts of the Co-ordinator for the Second Decade to initiate and maintain contact with the various organizations of the United Nations system. The dissemination of information, and the various seminars and discussions held under United Nations auspices, greatly helped to make people more aware of the needs and rights of others, and to counteract racist doctrines. The activities programmed for the biennium 1990-1991, as well as the previous plans of activities, represented an ongoing process. A high priority should be given to implementing not only the current initiatives, but also the unfinished aspects of previous plans.

He welcomed the Namibian people's achievement of genuine self-determination, national independence and territorial integrity. Namibia's independence had also reaffirmed the strength of fundamental human rights and the role of the United Nations in securing and protecting them.

The people of southern Africa continued to live in the shadow of apartheid. The recent unbanning of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other organizations, and the recent negotiations between ANC and the Pretoria régime, had created a positive climate. While those developments were a step in the right direction, they fell far short of meeting the demands of moral responsibility. The pressures brought to bear on the apartheid régime by the United Nations and the international community must be maintained until such time as South Africa evolved into a non-racial society, guaranteeing fundamental human rights for all and respect for the integrity of the human person.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

As a member of the Special Committee against Apartheid, the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa, and the United Nations Council for Namibia, his country had always maintained a commitment to the struggle against apartheid. It continued to abide by the mandatory arms embargo, the oil embargo and all the voluntary sanctions and boycotts which had been put in place in the absence of justified comprehensive and mandatory sanctions.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (continued) (E/1990/L.20)

Mr. GALAL (Observer for Egypt), introducing draft resolution E/1990/L.20, said that his country was seeking the support of the international community for its initiative in reviving an ancient reservoir of thought and knowledge. Having been handed down through classical Arabic and Islamic culture, the Ancient Library of Alexandria had played an instrumental role in launching the European Renaissance. Moreover, the great philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle, had acquired much of their knowledge from the Library. Hence, it was a focal point for contacts between various cultures and civilizations.

He expressed appreciation to all who had supported the project, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, donor countries, particularly from the Arab world, architects from many countries, and the Members of the United Nations which had sponsored the draft resolution. He announced that Albania, Cameroon, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, Ghana, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Portugal, Singapore, Sweden, Thailand, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

He hoped that the Economic and Social Council would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.